New Orleans States-Item

NOV 20 1972

SU Inquiry Panel Named

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By BILL LYNCH
States-Item Bureau

BATON ROUGE—Attorney General William J. Gusté Jr. today announced the creation of a 13-member commission of inquiry to investigate the violent deaths of two black students at Southern University last week.

At the same time, Guste also reported assigning a two-man team, one black and one white, both assistant attorneys general, to head up the investigation.

Guste said because criminal charges may follow, the investigation will be conducted like a grand jury hearing, "that is, in executive session. There will not be public interrogation."

HE SAID the public will be informed after each meeting about who the witnesses were, who will be called and what progress the commission has made.

The attorney general was assigned by Gov. Edwin W. Edwards to investigate the tragedy that occurred last Thursday.

"It is my intention to begin examining witnesses on Monday," Guste said.

The commission of inquiry will be composed of 12 persons, including students and educators, and will be presided over by Guste.

Ten of the 12 positions already have been filled, with two students from Southern yet to be named.

THE 10 NAMED to the committee already are: Judge Israel Augustine; Louisiana Tech President F. J. Taylor; USL dean of students Ray Blanco; Ouachita Parish Sheriff Bailey Grant; former New Orleans police official Sidney Cates; New Orleans lawyer Revius Ortigue; Shreveport lawyer Jack Dykes; former New York Times editor Turner Catledge; state Sen. Robert Jones of Lake Charles, and Rep. Theodore Marchand of New Orleans.

The commission was scheduled to meet today to organize and discuss its procedures.

"We will receive testimony from all

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participants in the tragedy and the events that preceded it," Guste said.

"This includes," he said, "the sheriff and his deputies, state and city police officers, the mayor of Baton Rouge, students, university administrators, newsmen, members of the state Board of Education, state Department of Education personnel and individuals from the governor's office and the governor."

Guste said his office already has begun taking steps to gather evidence.

"INDIVIDUAL TESTIMONY cannot be made public," he said. "However, at the conclusion of the investigation, a detailed report will be made public by the commission.

"If there are criminal charges that the commission feels should be considered, that information will be presented to the East Baton Rouge Parish grand jury."

He said, "I want to assure every

Officials had previously said their men had used nothing but tear gas to disperse students. But Edwards, in talking with newsmen, acknowledged a law enforcement officer might have mistakenly fired live ammunition at the fleeing students.

THE LOS ANGELES Times also claimed Edwards will fire Southern University's 65-year-old Dr. G. Leon Netterville in July, claiming Edwards said Netterville is out of touch with students.

The story also said Edwards will accede to all of the student demands and welcomes their participation in the school administration, but would not agree to a complete takeover of the campus.

Edwards denied he would fire Netterville, adding that power belongs to the state Board of Education.

He said he had commented in the past that many of the student demands have merit and could be implemented without delay. He added he does not intend to agree to all demands.

In Baton Rouge, Dr. Netterville Friday sent dismisal notices to two faculty members, including the head of the physics department, Dr. Joseph Johnson. Sources said the president had fired several other instructors who had encourage student protests.

Netterville would not comment on the administration firings, but Johnson, who received his notice in a registered letter, called it "a grotesque and perverted attempt to deflect blame from his massacre."

JOHNSON SAID, "Black people know whose hands are bloody. Let us not for the moment be confused. Mr. Netterville knows that I have not encouraged disruption. I simply encouraged him to resign."

George W. Baker, the other instructor known to have been fired, had appeared before the board of education on behalf of protesting students. Johnson had been talked about by dissidents as a possible successor to Netterville.

Students — both in Baton Rouge and New Orleans — have demanded that Netterville be fired along with Dr. Emmett W. Bashful, vice president and chief local administrator of the SUNO campus.

Bashful resigned Nov. 9 under student pressure, but the board of education refused to accept his resignation.

The letter of dismissal to Baker read, in part: "By serving as adviser to the dissident students you have been instrumental in promoting activities which disrupted the normal educational process of the university."

Guste said he plans to seek additional funds from the administration to conduct the investigation. He said he will particularly need funds to employ secretarial help and for recording and transcribing considerable testimony.

JULIEN, WHO has been teaching at Xavier University in New Orleans, is a recent graduate of the Columbia Law School and joined the attorney general's staff as a special counsel.

Vick, who formerly was associated with Sen. Michael O'Keefe's law firm, became an assistant attorney general in May and was working on the attorney general's efforts to collect interest from a Jefferson Parish bank for use of highway funds.

Guste plans to have his staff interrogate witnesses among students as well as police who took part in the melee at the Southern administration building.

citizen of Louisiana that this will be an extremely thorough examination of the incident and what led to it."

Guste said Gov. Edwards has assured him of his cooperation.

Meanwhile, students at Southern University at New Orleans today held a memorial service for the two killed at Baton Rouge in Shakespeare Park.

The SUNO Propaganda Committee announced that a class boycott will continue Monday, despite an announced settlement.

An unidentified woman spokesman for the propaganda committee said Gov. Edwards "stifled" the settlement "when he ordered the murder of two black students and instructed the Board of Education not to accept the resignation of Dr. Emmett W. Bashful (dean of SUNO.)

Earlier, Guste named the two staff members to head up his probe.

The investigators are Kendall Vick, 42, a New Orleans lawyer who has been on Guste's staff since Guste took office last May, and Henry Julien Jr., a 24-year-old black lawyer who joined the staff a week ago.

THEY WILL WORK directly under Guste in investigating the deaths of the two 20-year-old students, Denver A. Smith of New Roads and Leonard Douglas Brown of Gilbert.

Guste said the investigation will be conducted in secret.

The Justice Department has ordered the FBI to investigate the incident and Guste said he will ask the federal agents to conduct their probe in cooperation with the state investigation.

The Guste probe was ordered by Gov. Edwin W. Edwards who yesterday denied as "totally inaccurate" a Los Angeles Times story that said Edwards blamed a deputy sheriff for the student deaths.

The newspaper quoted the governor as saying, "I have no doubt it was a deputy sheriff who fired."

AN ANGRY Edwards labeled the story "an irresponsible, inaccurate and unauthorized two-minute summarization, out of context, of a two-hour conversation, of which the reporter overheard only about 30 minutes."

Southern's main campus and Southern University in New Orleans are closed until next Monday.

Asa Sims, dean of academic affairs at SUNO, said Saturday that faculty and students had reached accord on some of the differences that have plagued the lakefront campus since Oct. 27.

Guste's probe apparently will focus on the 30-minute confrontation in front of the SU administration building.

Guste said the probe will be conducted in secret.